



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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GOVERNOR

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**Hawaii State Department of Health Solicits
Public Comment on Pandemic Flu Preparedness & Response Plan**

HONOLULU – The Hawaii State Department of Health is releasing a draft of Hawaii's Pandemic Flu Preparedness & Response Plan on Tuesday, November 22nd and is asking for comments and feedback from the general public. The plan is available for viewing on the Department of Health's website at: www.hawaii.gov/health until 4:30pm on December 9, 2005.

"One of today's most important public health challenges is the threat of a global flu outbreak, or an influenza pandemic. This plan will help to enhance Hawaii's public health preparedness but there is still much left to do," said Health Director Chiyome Fukino, M.D. "One way the people of Hawaii can contribute to our state's preparedness is to review the draft plan and offer comments and feedback."

The Pandemic Flu Preparedness & Response Plan will help guide and facilitate statewide emergency preparations and is just one step in Hawaii's response to the possibility of a flu pandemic. Last week Governor Linda Lingle approved \$15 million dollars to stockpile a supply of antiviral medications and to develop an enhanced data management system to track and monitor exposed and ill persons, their treatments, conditions, and outcomes. In addition, a multi-agency committee consisting of State Departments, private agencies (Red Cross, Healthcare Association of Hawaii, etc.), and members of the State Legislature will be created to meet and discuss necessary preparations for a possible pandemic.

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